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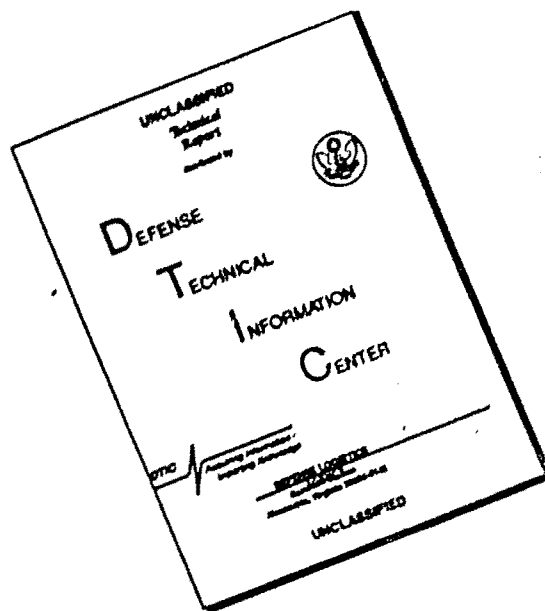
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

ACAM-P (M) (18 Jul 68) FOR OT RD 682184 31 July 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 13th  
Combat Aviation Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1968 (U)

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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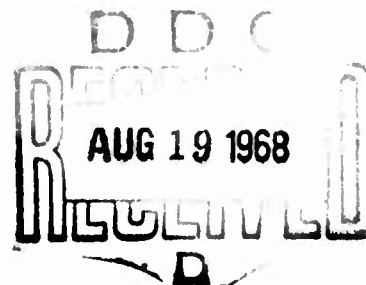
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters, 13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion  
APO San Francisco 96215

AVIN-G

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion  
for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOM-65(R1)

## SEE DISTRIBUTION

### 1. (C) Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities

a. Unit Mission. There was no change to the unit mission during this period. The assignment of the 271st Assault Support Helicopter Company (ASHC) doubled the daily cargo helicopter support to IV Corps from the one platoon of CH-47's provided by the 147th ASHC to the two platoons of CH-47's from the 271st ASHC. The platoon from the 147th ASHC returned to its home base in Vung Tau on 10 March 1968.

b. Organization. During this reporting period the 271st Assault Support Helicopter Company (CH-47) was assigned to this headquarters on 21 February 68 by VJCO and subsequently by GO 6 Hq 164th Aviation Group dated 9 March. At the close of the reporting period the organization was as follows:

- (1) Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment.
- (2) The 114th Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 544th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 96th Signal Detachment (RL) attached.
- (3) The 121st Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 80th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 257th Signal Detachment (RL) attached.
- (4) The 175th Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 150th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 28th Signal Detachment (RL) attached.
- (5) The 271st Assault Support Helicopter Company (CH-47) with the 361st Transportation Detachment (KD) attached.
- (6) The 336th Assault Helicopter Company (UH-1) with the 167th Transportation Detachment (KD) and the 277th Signal Detachment (RL) attached.

### c. Changes in Command and Staff.

- (1) LTC William W. Cole, 073304, was assigned as Executive Officer on 15 March 68. There was no executive officer assigned at the time LTC Cole assumed the position.

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AVEN-G

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operations Report of 13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion  
for Period Ending 30 April 1968, ACS CSFOR-65(RL)

(2) LTC William W. Cole, 073304, was reassigned by Hq. 164th Aviation Group as Commanding Officer, 345th Airfield Support Detachment on 29 March. LTC Horace A. Bond, 01886977, was assigned as Executive Officer on 22 April 1968.

(3) Major Steven L. Rodgers, 04074632, was assigned as S-3 on 1 April 68. Major Roger K. Paquette, 087305, was reassigned as Assistant S-3.

(4) LTC William W. Cole assumed the position of acting Commander of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion on 26 April when LTC James L. Tow was wounded as a result of enemy action. LTC Tow returned to duty on 4 May.

d. Unit strength as of 30 April 1968:

(1) Military

UNIT	OFFICER			WO			EM		TOTAL	
	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Man</u>	<u>Pres</u>	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Man</u>	<u>Pres</u>	<u>Auth</u>	<u>Pres</u>	<u>Man</u>	<u>Pres</u>
HHD	22	17	21	2	2	2	101	93	120	116
114th	15	12	17	52	45	39	152	177	209	233
544th	1	1	1	1	1	1	70	65	72	67
96th	1	1	1				9	6	10	7
121st	15	12	18	52	45	45	152	168	209	231
80th	1	1	1	1	1	1	70	55	72	57
257th	1	1	1				9	5	10	6
175th	15	12	14	52	45	41	152	143	209	198
150th	1	1	1	1	1	1	70	61	72	63
28th	1	1	1				9	9	10	10
336th	15	12	15	52	45	43	152	150	209	208
167th	1	1	1	1	1	1	69	54	71	56
277th	1	1	1				9	10	10	11
271st	13	12	10	25	22	24	143	161	177	195
361st	1	1	1	1	1	1	80	73	82	75
13th CAB	104	86	104	240	209	199	1247	1230	1542	1533

UNIT	DAC		VN		3rd Natl		Contractor
	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>O/H</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>O/H</u>	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>O/H</u>	
HHD	0	0	4	14	0	0	0
114th	0	0	4	14	0	0	0
121st	0	0	25	69	0	0	0
175th	0	0	5	12	0	0	0
336th	0	0	26	53	0	0	0
271st	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13th CAB	0	0	64	159	0	0	0

NOTE: Contractor personnel are available through Direct Support Maintenance Unit on an as needed basis.

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AVEN-C

14 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion  
for Period Ending 30 April 1968, ACS CSFOL-65(R1)

(3) The battalion continues to experience a shortage in the following critical MOS's

(a) 76W20 - Acft Fuel Hand Sp.

(b) 11E2F - Machine Gunner

(c) 35I20 - Av Comm Eq Rpmn

(d) ~~6F~~N40 - Platoon Sergeants

e. Aircraft Status as of 30 April 1968. See Incl 2

f. Operational Results as of 30 April 1968. See Incl 3

g. Operations. General. (1) During this reporting period the 13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion continued to provide the 7th, 9th and 21st ARVN Infantry Divisions and the 44th Special Zone with aviation support. Direct support was also provided to Military Advisory Group IV Corps, Special Forces, and CORDS. These missions include command liaison, outpost resupply, medical evacuation, aerial escort, combat troop transport, reconnaissance and surveillance and direct fire support by armed helicopter. The 13th Combat Aviation Battalion flew a total of 36,704 hours during the months of February, March and April. Approximately 50 Project Fix personnel assigned TDY for 90 days contributed immeasurably to the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion's overall mission and very high flying hour total. Replacements for the Project Fix personnel have arrived. Generally the MOS structure has been filled, however, there is a shortage of NCO's. A substantial increase in cargo transport was realized with the 271st ASHC providing six CH-47 helicopters daily in support of the IV Corps area. In addition, a U6A was assigned to the HHD, providing command and liaison and cargo transport support to the Battalion. On or about 5 March a portion of the staff of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion split from the previously consolidated staff of the 164th Aviation Group and this Headquarters. The CO, XO, S-1 and S-3 located their headquarters within the same administration building as the 164th Aviation Group. The S-4 and maintenance remained consolidated due to shortage of personnel and/or facilities. The logistics, safety and maintenance portion of the lessons learned will appear as a consolidated report in the 164th Aviation Group GRL.

(2) AGI. On 29 February the Battalion received their AGI from USARV with satisfactory results. The Battalion was commended for historical records, aviation operations, and preparation of flight records.

(3) Stand-Down Day. Starting 24 April 68 a maintenance stand-down day policy was initiated. Under the policy each helicopter company is stood down one day per week for maintenance. On a stand-down day, the unit is not levied for any aviation assets except for tactical emergencies. The entire day is devoted to maintenance of aircraft. It is anticipated that

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the maintenance stand-down day policy will eventually result in a greater availability and mission reliability with no overall loss in aviation support rendered to users.

(4) CS Gas Mission. The 7th and 9th ARVN Inf Div have been employing CS gas to deny or restrict designated areas from the Viet Cong. The CS in a fine powdery crystal form is dispersed over the designated area by detonating a 55 gallon drum containing the CS. These 55 gallon drums of CS are dropped from CH-47 Chinook helicopters. The mission, while not new to Vietnam, is a new tactic within the IV CTZ. Reports from the Division Chemical Advisors on the missions flown to date indicate the missions have been highly successful relative to effective area coverage and accuracy of drop. Most of the CS gas missions flown have been with visual reference to the target area. However, two recent missions were flown under IMC conditions without reference to the target area. Transponder equipment on board the aircraft and sophisticated radar at fixed ground locations integrated with a computer system provided sufficient data to the crew members of the aircraft to permit accurate delivery of the CS drums on the target area. The system utilized is comparable to the SKY SPOT method of bomb delivery. The accuracy of both delivery means can be attributed to techniques devised and employed by the 271st ASHC and the adaptation of an existing weapons delivery technique and equipment. The enemy ground forces have had little effect on the conduct of the mission. Gunship escort contributed greatly in deterring hostile fire.

(5) Airmobile Operations. A notable difference in the conduct of airmobile operations during this period was the participation of VNAF CH-34 aircraft. Commencing 8 April 68, two VNAF Squadrons provided up to ten CH-34 aircraft to participate in troop lifts, troop extractions and resupply on a daily basis. Overall this support has been satisfactory with continuing improvement occurring in formation flying, LC landing and departure techniques, following instructions, and understanding of the English language and concept of the airmobile operation. While during this period 102 airmobile operations were supported, the more significant operations during this period were conducted on 26 February, 7-10 March and 26-28 March.

(a) On 26 February in the Vinh Long Province, Chau Thanh District the 9th ARVN Infantry Division conducted an airmobile search and destroy mission. Intelligence indicated elements of the 306th and 307th Battalions had been operating in the area for three weeks. Aviation elements of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion provided 8 armed transports, 1 platoon of guns (5 aircraft) and a C and C aircraft. The Air Mission Commander approved of the selection of the LZ but emphasized that the area would not be suitable for extraction. The Task Force Commander assured the Air Mission Commander that no extraction was planned and the troops would be walking out. Immediately after the 360 troops of the 1/15 Battalion were deployed heavy fire was received and the friendly forces were pinned down. The 1/15 Battalion remained under VC pressure for nine hours. At approximately 1730 hours the Task Force Commander elected to extract the troops. The Air Mission Commander advised against an extraction from the current friendly location due to heavy concentration of enemy fire including mortar fire. The Task Force Commander elected to extract

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the troops. As the transports landed at the PZ a heavy mortar barrage commenced, hitting and turning over one aircraft. Its crew was picked up without injury by another transport. Armed helicopters covering the pick up zone were receiving heavy fire. It became apparent to the Air Mission Commander that if the damaged aircraft was not destroyed the VC would capture the weapons, ammunition, and radios. The Battalion Commander was appraised of the situation, became airborne to observe the situation, and gave his approval to destroy the aircraft in place. Results of the operation were as follows:

63	VC KIA
22	VC Suspects
1	Captured VC
22	Assorted weapons
3	B40 rounds
14	B50 rounds

(b) From 7-10 March in the Kien Giang, Chuong Thien, and Bac Lieu Provinces elements of the 21st ARVN Infantry Division conducted airmobile search and destroy missions. Elements of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion provided an average of 2 C&C aircraft, 1 platoon of guns (5 aircraft), and twelve transports daily. On 5 March intelligence information was received indicating a large cache of VC supplies in the vicinity of Rach Gia. On the evening of 6 March an initial force of 260 troops were quickly airlifted into the immediate area of the cache. Two and one-half hours later at 2030 hours an additional 200 troops were lifted into the area to ensure the protection of the cache until the next day. The following day 280 more troops were lifted in the area. The search and destroy mission continued with an additional 160 troops being inserted in the afternoon. On 9 March the operation was shifted to Vi Thanh (Chuong Thien Province). Moderate contact was made by the 240 troops lifted into the area. Airstrikes and gunships continued to give direct fire on VC positions, assisting in the fortified positions being fully overrun. On 10 March only light contact was made in the Bac Lieu operation by the 260 troops airlifted in an LZ, thus ending the four day operation. The results of the four day operation were as follows:

141	VC KIA	5	82mm mortars
21	VC Suspects	62	60mm mortars
21	Draft dodgers	9	57mm RR
5	12.7 AA Machine guns	2	B40 Launchers
3	K2	3	Automatic rifles
5	M-1's	90	Mausers
4	Russian rifles	3	Chicom rifles
8	Carbines	14	Extra MG Barrels
8	Cases 82mm mortar ammo	3	Cases AK-47 ammo
10	<del>Cases</del> Russian rifle ammo	2	Tons assorted ammo
140	Cases grenades	2	Kilos documents

(c) From 26 - 28 March in the Ba Xuyen Province elements of 21st ARVN Infantry Division conducted a search and destroy mission. Intelligence reports

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indicated approximately 600 VC in area to include member of the Soc Trang Provincial Mobile Battalion. Elements of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion provided an average of 2 C&C aircraft, 2 platoons of guns (7 aircraft) and 12 transports daily. In addition 8 VNAF CH-34 helicopters were provided on the 26th and 3 on the 27th. On the 28th 5 CH-47B Chinook aircraft were employed to extract troops from the operational area.

On 26 March the 44th Ranger element consisting of 340 troops was lifted into the LZ. Eight VNAF CH-34's assisted in the insertion of the troops. A VNAF pilot on one CH-34 was wounded. The co-pilot not fully qualified to fly the aircraft out was picked up with remainder of the crew and flown to Soc Trang. An experienced crew was flown in within the hour and the aircraft was flown from the LZ to a secure area for battale damage repair. By 1115 hours, 360 troops of the 33rd Regiment were lifted in. The ground units had made significant contact and remained over night while the aviation assets were released to their home stations at 1930 hours.

The following day only a C&C ship was available during the morning hours. In the afternoon heavy contact was made and gunships were called on station. Five VNAF CH-34 helicopters and 8 UH-1D transports lifted in an additional 360 troops followed by resupply missions. The VNAF CH-34 was downed by VC fire. The crew was rescued but the aircraft could not be recovered because of enemy fire. The ARVN elected to leave the aircraft in the LZ pending recovery the following day, if it still remained; however, the aircraft was destroyed by VC during the night.

On 28 March extractions began at 1400 hours. Unique in the extraction was the decision by IV Corps to utilize CH-47 Chinook aircraft to assist in the extraction thereby taking the maximum number of troops from the LZ in the minimum time. Gunships escort was utilized during the extraction which occurred without incident. Results of the operation were as follows:

154	VC KIA	8	Carbines
2	VC Suspects	4	M-1's
5	Machine guns	1	B40
7	Mausers	5	60mm rounds
4	AK50's	2	57RR rounds
3	K2's	360	Grenades
1	K1	11	Boxes ammo
1	AK47	1	BAR

h. Training. Continuing emphasis has been placed on DA and USARV mandatory training subjects consistent with operational commitments. To permit maximum attendance by aircraft crew members, classes are normally scheduled during the early evening hours.

Full advantage has been taken of available in-country school quotas. During this period a total of 27 EM attended supply and maintenance courses at Vung Tau. An officer from each company attended the USAF Jungle Survival School in the Phillipines. Unit armorers attended a one day course on organizational maintenance procedures for the M-16A1 rifle at Can Tho.

## 1. Morale and Discipline

(1) The number of approved recommendations for awards received during this period are shown by type and totals awarded:

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SSM 3 LM 1 DFC 39 BS"V" 13 AM"V" 25 ACM"V" 14 BS 9 AM 1362  
ACM 42 PH 56

(2) During this reporting period the number of approved disciplinary actions taken under UMCJ were:

	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Warrant Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted Men</u>
General	0	0	0
Special	0	0	4
Summary	0	0	0
Article 15's	0	0	40
Total	0	0	44

(3) The following number of personnel were reported as casualties during this period.

KIA 12 WIA 75

(4) The number of personnel that took R&R leave to the Various countries is denoted below:

AUS 22 ENK 26 HAW 71 H.K. 18 MAN 4 K.L. 4 PEN 5 SING 6  
TAI 28 Tokyo 22 Vung Tau 14 \*Stdby 11 Total 231

\*Note: eleven additional persons went on R&R on a stand-by basis to several of the above locations.

j. Maintenance. (1) During the months of March and April, the four (4) Assault Helicopter Companies in the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion received two (2) each XM-156 Multi-Armament Mounts to replace their M-3 Rocket Launcher Subsystem. The XM-156 mount was designed to employ the M-157 or M-159 reusable aluminum tube rocket launchers.

(2) During this report period, civilian contract Aircraft Maintenance sheet metal personnel arrived in country to support KD and KB Detachments. The Transportation Detachments within the Battalion supporting the four (4) Assault Helicopter Companies and the Assault Support Helicopter Company were assigned two (2) additional sheetmetal men.

k. Logistics. (1) The aerial resupply problem of POL to the prestock/stagefields in the Delta has for the most part been eliminated. This was made possible by a system of priority O1 airlift using either C-123 or C-130 blatterbird aircraft. The resupply system is based on reported daily stockage levels and replenished against the deficits. The requests are processed through 1st Logistical Command channels to the Airlift Control Center of the 7th Air Force. This system is flexible and provides for timely support to those locations most urgently in need of POL products.

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(2) The responsibility for storage and handling of POL and ammunition located at the prestock/stagefields throughout the IV CTZ formerly belonged to the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion at Can Tho. This responsibility was transferred to the 307th Combat Aviation Battalion at Soc Trang. Under the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion, supervision of these products was directed from Can Tho to the 16 stagefields throughout the Delta; this proved insufficient and difficult at best. The transfer of responsibility provides direct supervision by the O-1 aviators supporting the sectors and who are already located at each stagefield. The maintenance efforts at these facilities have proven much more responsive.

## 1. Safety:

(1) The number of reportable aircraft accidents increased slightly during this reporting period as compared to the previous quarter. No new trends have been identified in accident cause factors, however, worthy of note is the large reduction in the number of accidents caused by a loss of rotor RPM on landings and takeoffs. A two hundred and fifty pound reduction in the normal fuel load has been instrumental in reducing the possibility of overloading the aircraft while maintaining the same ACL. The Battalion accident rate for this period was 44.3 with a Fiscal Year cumulative accident rate of 39.2 through April 1968.

(2) During April there was a sharp decline in accidents and other reportable mishaps over the months of February and March. Increased command emphasis on accident prevention, a slight reduction in total flying hours, and a twenty four hour stand down of each aircraft and crew for maintenance purposes once each week has contributed to this decline. Additionally, an assistance visit from the 1st Avn Bde Aviation Safety Officer and an informative lecture by the Deputy Brigade Commander assisted in emphasizing the aircraft accident prevention program.

(3) Inflight failure of the T-53 turbine engine continues to be a problem area. The current rate of inflight engine failures is 5.0 per month. In an attempt to reduce this failure rate a daily inspection of the barrier filter, particle separators, and the engine intake is being conducted by the aircraft flight crew. Emphasis is being placed on the elimination of FOD caused failures. An engine cleaning process has been initiated, to be conducted in conjunction with scheduled maintenance, which should improve engine performance as well as extend engine life.

(4) Introduction of the Nomex flight suit in this command occurred in April. Due to the limited amount of time since introduction of this uniform, no evaluation can be given, however, it was readily accepted for use by the flight crews.

(5) Increased exposure to flight hazards, created by a runway construction project, at one base airfield, has been caused by a lack of the necessary material with which to complete the programmed work. Shortage of asphalt and a non-skid compound for application on the M8A1 matting runway are causing the delay and the flight hazards.

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## m. Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment Quarterly Summary.

This period will be remembered as the time when "Uncommon Valor" became a common thing with men of HHD 13th CAB. On the morning of 2 February 1968, HHD provided twenty-six of the volunteers who were flown to the aid of Vinh Long Airfield which was on verge of being overrun. These soldier-clerks aided in stemming the tide and repulsing the Viet Cong onslaught. Also, during this period of intense enemy activity, three other men of this command made a valiant stand at Can Tho airfield repelling a VC attack with a 40MM Honeywell Grenade Launcher rapid-fire mounted on a jeep. During the frequent mortar attacks many of these men distinguished themselves by acts of heroism. Never before in its history has the Headquarters Detachment been required to accomplish what they did in this period. Working all day at their assigned tasks, the men built their fortifications by night, constructing four fighting bunkers and two personnel bunkers.

This was also a time of change. On 8 February Captain Joseph Lazzari OF114440 assumed command from Captain James Bondurant 05406483. Additionally, 13th Delta Battalion became known as the "Guardian", passing on her proud prefix "Delta" to the newly activated 164th Combat Aviation (Delta) Group.

## 2. (U) Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel. None

b. Operations

### (1) Aft Cyclic Restriction

(a) OBSERVATION. The armor plated seat in the UH-1 aircraft when in the full up and full forward position, restricts full aft movement of the cyclic in the UH-1B and to a lesser degree, in the UH-1D.

(b) EVALUATION. It has been found that the seat in the full up and forward position in the "B" model restricts the application of aft cyclic by two (2) inches. In the "D" model, the cyclic strikes the seat cushion when full aft cyclic is applied under the same circumstances. There may be circumstances which would require full aft cyclic, hence the seat in the full up and full forward position creates a potential hazard.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. This observation be given the widest possible dissemination, and that this restriction to aft cyclic travel be eliminated through a decrease in allowable seat travel upward and forward.

### (2) Landing to Isolated Helipads Without Air to Ground Communications

(a) OBSERVATION. Ground elements use mines extensively, to include near, on and around helipads.

(b) EVALUATION. Recently a single ship (helicopter) was making an approach to and isolated helipad with no air to ground communi-

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cation with the ground element. At the bottom of his approach just prior to the skids touching down several individuals on the ground began waving the pilot off. Smoke was thrown in another area near the helipad and the ship came in to the new spot. It was explained by the ground element that they had mined the pad for "Charlie" since the VC had previously attempted to do the same. This was done with the hope of catching "Charlie" at his own game when he made his next attempt.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION.** A US RV Directive be published prohibiting the deliberate mining of helipads as a means of counter offensive tactics against the VC.

(3) Fuzing System for CS Gas Barrels.

(a) **OBSERVATION.** The lack of standardized fuzing system employed with the airborne delivery of CS Gas by CH-47 helicopters has precluded optimum accuracy and assurance of complete target coverage.

(b) **EVALUATION.** In the past, insufficient emphasis has been placed upon the standardization of fuzing system to be used for the explosive dissemination of CS Gas from the 55 gallon containers. As a result, exit time of the container from the aircraft varies as much as 50%. In order to insure complete target coverage, a computed ground speed based upon container exit rate is required. The lack of a standard fuzing system within IV Corps precludes the standardization of aerial delivery methods to be employed by helicopter crews.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION.** That a standardized fuzing system be developed and employed by all units, and this information be disseminated to supporting aviation elements.

(4) AH-1G Recovery Procedures

(a) **OBSERVATION.** Existing rigging procedures used with the AH-1G helicopter recovered by CH-47 helicopters resulted in an airspeed limitation which precludes the recovery aircraft from operating at a safe single engine airspeed.

(b) **EVALUATION.** The existing procedures used for the recovery of the AH-1G helicopter from field sites are marginally satisfactory due to the fact that at airspeeds above 30 knots the AH-1G rotates to the left presenting its fuselage perpendicular to the relative wind. The resulting drag induces severe oscillations into the recovery aircraft. The airspeed limitation thereby presented forces the recovery aircraft to operate between 30 and 40 knots (below safe single engine airspeed). Should an engine malfunction occur in the recovery aircraft, no alternative exists but to release the AH-1G.

(c) **RECOMMENDATION.** Maintenance support activities conducting rigging operations at field sites procure drogue parachutes complete with 360 degree

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swivels and devise a method for attaching them to the tailboom of the AH-1G to ensure streamlining of the aircraft in flight with resultant higher allowable speeds by the recovery aircraft.

(5) Modification to CH-47B Ventilation System

(a) OBSERVATION. During CH-47B takeoff, landing, and hover operations, a large amount of dirt and dust is stirred up by rotorwash and is being pulled into the aircraft ventilation system and blown into the cockpit.

(b) EVALUATION. By removing the vent pipe which has been substituted for the aircraft heater in tropical areas and allowing air to be drawn directly into the ventilation system from the heater closet this problem can be eliminated. Approximately thirty (30) manhours are required to make the modification. All necessary adaptors can be fabricated locally. The 271st ASHC submitted an EIR on this modification.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. That future CH-47 aircraft prepared for shipment to RVN be modified to draw air into the ventilation system from the heater closet instead of the outside.

(6) Avionics Support

(a) OBSERVATION. Review of the records of supply actions of the units of this Battalion indicates there is a critical shortage of avionics spare parts, float equipment, and general support level maintenance for the new types of avionics equipment arriving in country. Specifically, several such systems are the AN/ASN 43, AN/ARN 82, AN/ARN 83, AN/ARC 134, ARC 51, ARC 54, and APX 44. Members of the AGI team during its inspection of this Battalion on 26 February 1968 advised that parts and floats were available from General Support Level. However, there are currently 19 requisitions outstanding with only 8% of floats authorized being on hand.

(b) EVALUATION. The shortages of the above communications and navigation equipment directly effects the conduct of combat operations in the Delta. On one completely dark night an unreliable Directional G,ro, AN/ASN 43, caused an aviator to fly over the South China Sea rather than back to his home station.

(c) RECOMMENDATION. Action be initiated to procure the float equipment necessary to maintain back-up capability, which is both necessary and appropriate in view of the tactical support requirements of this battalion.

(7) VNAF CH-34 Support. See Incl 4.

c. Training. None

d. Intelligence. None



14.

e. Logistics. Refueling System

(1) OBSERVATION. The efficiency of refueling helicopters is highly dependent upon the type of dispensing systems employed. There are presently 16 prestock/stagefields in the IV CTZ that employ various dispensing units. These include M49 tank trucks, 2½ ton trucks with tank and pump units and filter systems from 50-350 GPM capacities. There are approximately 11,000 feet of hose that vary in size from 1½ inches to 4 inches in diameter that require constant maintenance. The upkeep of these varied systems is imperative in order to provide facilities in support of airmobile operations.

(2) EVALUATION. The inadequate supply of repair parts for the tank trucks plus the limited repair facilities at these stagefields, has reduced refueling capabilities. Repair teams must be dispatched to many locations in order to perform 2d and limited 3rd echelon maintenance. This is necessary because of the distance and accessibility to these stagefields from direct support maintenance shops. The maintenance of the various pumps, hose, and bladders has been inadequate because of a lack of repair parts and replacement items.

(3) RECOMMENDATIONS. A standard refueling system should be developed to provide rapid refueling of a minimum of 10 helicopters at one time. This system must be simple to maintain and durable in a hot damp climate. The utilization of these systems would greatly reduce the necessity for the many tanks now required. Also, the need to maintain five different size pumps would be reduced to a single system.

f. Organization. None

g. Other. None

4 Incl

1. 13th CAB Operational Statistics
2. 13th CAB Aircraft Status
3. Organization and Stationing
4. Unsatisfactory Mission Report,  
VNAF Flight, 27 April 1968

*James L. Toiv*  
JAMES L. TOIV  
LTC, Infantry  
Commanding

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- 2-CG, 1st Aviation Brigade
- 4-CO, 164th Aviation Group
- 8-S-3 Operational File

15  
AVON (14 May 1968) 1st Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 13th Combat Aviation Battalion for the Period  
Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

Commanding Officer, 164th Aviation Group, APO San Francisco 96215, 28 May 68

TO: Commanding General, 1st Aviation Brigade, ATTN: AVBA-C, APO 96384

1. (U) The attached 13th CAB ORIL for the period ending 30 April 68 has been evaluated as required by USARV Reg 525-15.

2. (U) The following comments on Section 2. Lessons Learned: Commanders Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations, are submitted.

a. Aft Cyclic Restriction: All aviators of this command have recently been reminded of the aft cyclic restriction. 1st Avn Bde has by message dated 21 May 68, informed all Brigade Units of the restriction. EIR has not been initiated by this command.

b. Landing to Isolated Helipads without air to ground communications: Non concur with the recommendation. This isolated incident does not warrant a USARV regulation to prevent reoccurrence.

c. Fuzing system for CS Gas Barrels: More specific recommendations have been submitted to USARV by separate correspondence.

d. AH-1G Recovery Procedures: The 611th Transportation Maintenance Company (DS) has responsibility in this location for rigging the AH-1G for recovery operations. They are aware of the problem and are developing a rigging technique to correct the situation.

e. Modification to CH-47B Ventilation System: Dust being drawn into the cockpit while hovering CH-47B helicopters is recognized as a safety hazard. An EIR has been submitted.

f. Avionics Support: Concur with the recommendation. Requisitions have been submitted and proper follow up action taken. However, avionics repair parts and floats continue to be in short supply.

g. Logistics, Refueling System: Acquisition and repair of refueling systems continues to be a major unresolved problem. A 12 point refueling system has been standardized and some have been received within USARV, however, none are currently available for use at any of the 16 POL sites maintained by this command.

AVCN

28 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 13th Combat Aviation Battalion for the Period  
Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

3. (U) VNAF CH-34 Support: The unsatisfactory mission report attached as incl 4 to 13th CAB ORLL is an inappropriate submission and should be disregarded. This headquarters has been assigned the mission of training these VNAF helicopter squadrons in airmobile operations. Progress is considered to be satisfactory.



ROBERT L. McDANIEL  
Colonel, Infantry  
Commanding

17

AVBA-C (14 May 68) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion  
for Period Ending 30 April 1968 LOS GSPC-65 (H1)

Headquarters, 1st Aviation Brigade, APO 96384

THRU: Commanding General, United States Army Vietnam, AFM: AVAC-101,  
APO 96375  
Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, AFM: GCP-OT,  
APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed this report, considers it to be adequate, and concurs with the contents as indorsed except for the following:

Paragraph 2b(6), page 11. Concur. Sufficient float, repair parts and adequately trained personnel are available for the AH-1C-54 and the AH-1C-51. While there is a shortage of AH-1C-8 and AH-1C-63 floats, there is sufficient float available to support these systems in view of their high degree of reliability. Adequate repair parts and trained personnel are available in-country. The AH-1C-44 is no longer being manufactured. It is being replaced by the AH-1C-72 which is expected to be available in July 1968. Adequate repair parts are available in-country for the AH-1C-44's presently installed.

2. (c) The following additional comments are considered pertinent:

a. Paragraph 2b(5), page 10. This information as to the suggested procedure for slingloading an AH-1G was disseminated to all 1st Aviation Brigade units.

b. Paragraph 2b(6), page 11. There is a shortage of OM-998/AH-143 directional gyroscopes at present. This item is not repairable in-country. Additional float must be made available to keep aircraft in a mission ready status. Shortage of float and repair parts for the AH-1C-134 is a serious problem throughout the command. It is anticipated that additional float will be available in the next few months alleviating the problem.

c. Paragraph 2g, 1st Indorsement. 25 bolted steel tanks of 250 barrel capacity have recently been released to the 164th Combat Aviation Group. These tanks will be used to expand present facilities. Increasing the number of actual fueling points is dependent on availability of hoses and hardware which continue to be in short supply.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

15 *Joseph A. Zimmerman*  
Major, AGC  
Adjutant General

AVHGC-DST (15 May 68) 3d Ind CPT Arnold/dls/LBN 4485  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion  
for Period Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65(R1)

HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 13 JUN 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons  
Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters,  
13th Combat Aviation Battalion as indorsed.

2. Concur with report as submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*C. S. Nakatsukasa*  
C. S. NAKATSUKASA  
Captain, AGC  
Assistant Adjutant General

Copy furnished:  
HQ 13th Cmbt Avn Bn  
HQ 1st Ave Bde

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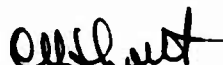
GPOP-DT (14 May 68) 4th Ind (U)  
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 13th Combat Avn  
(Guardian) Bn, for Period Ending 30 Apr 68,  
RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 3 JUL 1968

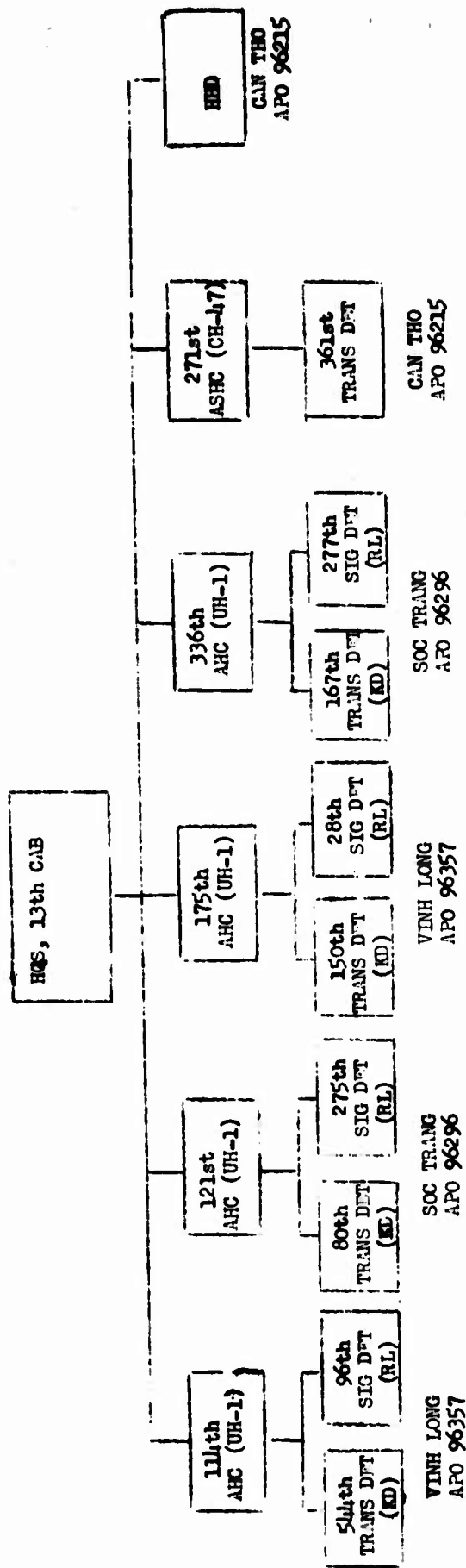
TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development,  
Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and  
forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as  
indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

  
C.I. SHORTT  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

ORGANIZATION AND STATIONING



CONFIDENTIAL

13th CAB AIRCRAFT STATUS  
30 April 1968

Subordinate Unit	UH-1B Auth O/H	UH-1C Auth O/H	UH-1D Auth O/H	CH-47 Auth O/H	UH-1A Auth O/H
114th AHC		8 7	23 20		
121st AHC	8 7		23 18		
175th AHC		8 8	23 18		
336th AHC	8 6		23 17		
271st ASHC				16 16	
HHD			0 1		1 1
13th CAB	16 13	16 15	92 74	16 16	1 1

CONFIDENTIAL



13th CAB OPERATIONAL STATISTICS  
QTR ENDING 30 April 1968

SUBORDINATE UNIT	SORTIES FLOWN	TROOPS LIFTED	CARGO LIFTED (TONS)	ENEMY KIA	STRUCTURES		SAMPAIS		AIRCRAFT CONFIRMED LOSS	A/C DAM <sup>3</sup>	TAC RFC	HRS FLOWN
					DAM	DEST	DAM	DEST				
114th AHC A/T A/H	22,416 2,329	31,856 0	478 0	17 501	0 0	12 238	0 0	41 262	9 0	30 41		6,445 1,725
121st AHC A/T A/H	17,927 2,053	45,342 0	755 0	18 512	0 0	0 1153	0 0	0 354	2 1	19 27		7,727 2,041
175th AHC A/T A/H	10,189 3,391	37,721 0	514 0	0 749	0 0	0 499	0 0	0 439	4 4	16 19		5,893 1,791
336th AHC A/T A/H	16,754 2,079	26,820 0	763 0	0 425	0 0	0 662	0 0	0 675	2 2	20 31		6,479 1,867
271st ASHC <sup>1</sup>	4,699	22,525	5,935	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	131	1,784
HHD <sup>2</sup>	231	240	1,521	0	0	0	0	0	0	1		285
13th CAB	82,068	164,504	9,966	2,222	0	2564	0	1861	24	217	131	36,637

NOTE: 1. 271st ASHC became operational on 10 March 1968  
2. This time includes U6A assigned to HHD on 17 April 1968  
3. Aircraft Loss/Damage as follows:  
114th AHC Aircraft Loss: 9 UH-1D, Aircraft Damage: 41 UH-1C and 30 UH-1D  
121st AHC Aircraft Loss: 1 UH-1B and 2 UH-1D, Aircraft Damage: 27 UH-1B and 19 UH-1D  
175th AHC Aircraft Loss: 4 UH-1C and 4 UH-1D, Aircraft Damage: 19 UH-1C and 16 UH-1D  
336th AHC Aircraft Loss: 2 UH-1B and 2 UH-1D, Aircraft Damage: 31 UH-1B and 20 UH-1D  
271st ASHC Aircraft Damage: 13 CH-47B

Incl 3

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121ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY (UH-1)  
13TH COMBAT AVIATION (GUARDIAN) BATTALION  
APO 96296  
"SOC TRANG TIGERS"

30 April 1968

SUBJECT: Unsatisfactory Mission Report, VNAF Flight, 27 April 1968

Commanding Officer  
13th Combat Aviation (Guardian) Battalion  
APO 96215

1. The following report is submitted on the performance of the VNAF CH-34 Flight which supported the 121st Assault Helicopter Company during Airmobile Operations for the 21st ARVN Division on 27 April 1968. This report is submitted as a constructive one to point out major deficiencies and shortcomings in the performance of the VNAF flight in the hopes that as these deficiencies are recognized, positive steps can be taken on the part of the VNAF personnel, their advisors and the U.S. Mission Commander to alleviate them and integrate the flight smoothly into joint airmobile operations.

2. Chronology and Specific Problems:

a. Briefing: On 26 April 1968, A.A.E., IV Corps notified the 121st Assault Helicopter Company of their primary mission responsibility for airmobile support for a 21st ARVN Division Search and Destroy operation on 27 April 1968 and included in the assets were 8 VNAF CH-34's. In preparation for this operation, the 164th Group Liaison Officer to the 21st ARVN Division personally visited the VNAF squadron at Ben Thuy and briefed the main USAF advisor and the squadron personnel involved. In addition he provided the squadron with two operational maps, one for lead and one for trail, which is normal distribution for a transport flight.

b. Reporting: At 0700, 27 April 1968, the VNAF flight reported to Soc Trang minus two aircraft which were delayed for maintenance and later joined the flight, but did not participate in the lifts because of the time element involved. Prior coordination was effected with the Airfield Commander, Soc Trang AAF and 115/145 tankers were standing by and the VNAF were refueled promptly. In order to provide adequate spacing for LZ insertion, the order called for the VNAF flight to take off 5 minutes behind the UH-1 flight which was accomplished.

c. Landing Zones: The first flight of 13 UH-1's touched down in LZ 1 under cover of an on-going airstrike at 0808 followed by 5 CH-34's at 0817.

Incl 4

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Because of mechanical problems with one UH-1 in the LZ and the necessity for getting it out of the LZ rapidly, the mission commander's attention was diverted from the VNAF flight and they flew beyond their RP before turning inbound necessitating a more circuitous route to the LZ. Both flights were directed to return to Soc Trang and pick up their next lifts and return to the same RP and LZ. Turn around time was 30 minutes for the UH-1's and 41 minutes for the CH-34's. Specific instructions were: "From Soc Trang, proceed direct RP4, from RP4, proceed to check point A-1, at A-1, turn to heading 225° for a descending left hand turn into LZ 1, located north of objective 4, contact Viking 21 over check point A-1". The VNAF flight leader rogered these instructions and reported A-1 and was told he was not yet in sight but to take up heading 225° and the guns would pick them up. I flew out to A-1 to locate the VNAF and the flight was still not in sight. At that time artillery had been given air clearance to fire from A1 to A29 and an airstrike was in progress on A23 from NW to SE breaking south. The VNAF had acknowledged the air clearance. I then observed VNAF flying over objective 10 some five kilometers SE of where he should have been and had gone through both the Gun-Target line and the flight path of the airstrikes causing much confusion in the process. The VNAF advisor in the trail of the VNAF flight had called his lead but to no avail. I then proceeded to vector the flight from objective 10 to the LZ. Subsequent analysis of the situation by following the VNAF on the next flight and monitoring his position at reporting point A1 revealed that he was some 5 kilometers east of A-1 when reporting it and as a result was completely off in his approach. I then proceeded to vector him for the last 10 kilometers to preclude a repeat of his previous misorientation. Detailed vectoring can be accomplished, however when lifts are going in three to five minutes apart, neither the mission commander nor the guns should direct their attention from the LZ insertion in progress to pick up a flight that far out. The guns and C&C on station must closely monitor the enemy situation in and around the LZ and insure that the ships in the most vulnerable position at the time get their undivided attention, supervision, and support.

### d. Resupply Mission:

(1) Scheme of Maneuver: The mission for the day was a two fold one, a search and destroy in one area and reinforcement, resupply, and medical evacuation for an outpost 16 kilometers to the north. Two ARVN battalions were inserted and employed in the search and destroy while the third and last was inserted to secure a landing zone for the outpost operation to the north.

### (2) Operation:

(a) Phase I: Following the insertion of the battalion to secure and LZ near the outpost, I returned and coordinated with the Division Liaison Officer on the reinforcement and resupply. Since 8 aircraft were required to carry reinforcements and 6 were required for resupply, I advised the Liaison Officer to have the UH-1's carry the reinforcements since they were being picked up in a field location and coordination would be difficult and have the CH-34's carry the supplies since they were to be loaded at Soc Trang and taken directly

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to the outpost LZ. The leads were informed of my plans and the CH-34's were loaded accordingly. Upon returning to the operational area and surveying the situation, I discovered that the security battalion was making extremely slow progress, and had encountered light resistance, it was doubtful that they would reach the outpost and secure an LZ before dark although they had been inserted between 1100-1200 hours and the distance was only 4000 meters.

(b) Phase II: Recognizing the importance of completing the mission on 27 April, I began to examine alternate courses of action. There was a large open area to the southeast of the outpost and I would attempt to insert the supplies in the field following a combat assault with the 8 transports of troop reinforcements. The proximity of the open area to the relief battalion would offer some mutual support. I reconnoitered the LZ and drew heavy automatic weapons fire on the C&C ship from the tree line on the north side of the LZ. The gunships were unable to get within 500 meters of the tree line without drawing heavy fire and the LZ was abandoned to await progress of the relief battalion. I advised the UH-1's to stand by at Soc Trang until I called for them later and advised the VNAF flight which had come airborne at 1605 with the supplies to do the same thing. I explained that the area was too hot and we would make the lifts later.

(c) Phase III: At 1700 hours, the relief battalion was only 1200 meters from the outpost and I knew they could not reach the outpost and secure an LZ before sunset. I once again looked for an alternative and determined that the relief battalion was in a favorable position to support a combat assault landing on the east side of "Five Canals." I had the gunships make a through reconnaissance, visually and by fire, and determined that the operation could be successful if executed immediately in that area. The supplies would have to be carried further from the east side but they could be landed that night and the medevacs could be made. I ordered the UH-1's airborne and landed the 8 slicks of reinforcements. It was then that I learned that the VNAF had unloaded the supplies and would not carry them. The UH-1's were immediately returned to pick up the supplies at Soc Trang and proceeded to land them in the LZ. Subsequent investigation revealed that the VNAF flight leader had told the Group Liaison Officer (after he had carried the supplies airborne once) that the VNAF flight was for airmobile troop lift and not resupply. This rebuff at a critical time delayed the operation and the Liaison Officer conferred with the VNAF advisor, Major Custer, USAF, in order to get support. Major Custer advised Captain Camia that he had consulted his higher headquarters at Ben Thuy and that this was true, VNAF was not to carry resupplies. Since the resupply was a critical part of the airmobile operation, such a position severely limited my capabilities as mission commander due to the fact that VNAF represented one-half of my assets.

d. Extraction: At 1715 hours, I returned to Soc Trang and conferred with Major General Minh at the Division CP concerning the next step in the operation. General Minh explained to me that all three Soc Trang defense battalions had been used on the day's operation and it was essential to get at least one out of the field and into Soc Trang that night. Since the two

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battalions on the search and destroy were near Highway 4, he could have them walk to the road and be trucked in but he was not sure that they would make it in time or that they would not hit enemy resistance. It was therefore essential that I extract by air the 1st Bn, 33d Infantry from "Five Canals" as soon as possible. I advised General Minh that I could accomplish this with the assets at hand (8UH-1's and 8 CH-34's) as soon as the troops lined up. As I returned to my aircraft, I noticed that the VNAF flight was not on the ramp. I immediately asked the Pathfinders where VNAF had gone and was told they had simply taken off. This cut my available assets in half and I then flew to the operational area to expedite the line up of troops since it was apparent that I would have to extract 400 troops with 8 UH-1's commencing at 1903 hours. I requested a "Spooky" flare ship for the night extraction and ordered out an extra fire team to assist in suppressing the hostile treelines around "Five Canals". The situation became more critical when I was advised that "Spooky" was encountering mechanical difficulty and would not arrive on station until one hour after sunset. In order to expedite the extraction and have the troops and aircraft out of the PZ before the VC were able to move into the surrounding treelines or bring mortars to bear, I departed from established practice and utilized every available aircraft in the area for the tactical extraction including the covering "Dust-Off", the covering maintenance aircraft, the Senior Advisor's aircraft standing by, to return General Minh to Bac Lieu, and one CH-47. By so doing, the extractions were complete at 1954 hours. On the final extraction, the transports began to draw automatic weapons fire into and out of the LZ. Had another lift been required, it is anticipated that the intensity of the fire would have increased because of the cover provided by darkness. Had the VNAF CH-34's been available, the lifts would probably have been completed before EENT and without the undue risk of inserting a CH-47 into a tactical PZ after sunset and the commitment of all overhead covering-assets (Dust-Off and maintenance recovery) to troop lifts. Based on the urgency of the situation as expressed to me by the CG, 21st Division and in view of the situation and the hostile terrain, I accepted the risks to complete the mission at hand in the minimum time before the VC could fully react to our actions.

### 3. Analysis of the VNAF Problems:

a. Landing Zones: The VNAF flight leader was not thoroughly familiar with the operational map although it had been provided well in advance. He acknowledged explicit instructions when in fact he was either misoriented or did not understand the instructions. Further, he acknowledged air clearance on artillery fire and airstrikes, then proceeded to fly through them endangering his flight and all personnel on board.

b. Resupply Mission: This is a recurring one and the VNAF as well as their MACV Advisors seem to be somewhat confused as to what constitutes combat resupply during an airmobile operation and administrative resupply. Quite frequently, resupply itself may be the basic mission for an airmobile assault and during the conduct of an operation, the flight must be willing to accept the missions and judgements of the mission commander in these matters.

c. Extraction: Combat operations, especially ground operations, cannot always be run on an explicit time table once the ground element is committed hence the supporting airmobile unit itself must adjust to the terrain, weather, enemy

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situation and schedule of the ground unit. Night extractions are a part of this support and the capability must be present. It has been stated on occasion that the VNAF do not fly at night, however this has not always been the case. Only two weeks prior to this during an operation at Ca Mau, the VNAF flight assisted immeasurably by transporting seven loads of personnel from Ca Mau to Bac Lieu well after dark. Further, the extractions on 27 April would have been completed before total darkness had the VNAF not released themselves to their home station. On airmobile operations in the IV CTZ, assets are normally assigned to the mission commander until mission completion which is determined jointly by the mission commander and the senior ground unit commander/senior advisor. In this case no one associated with the operation had released the VNAF nor was I advised that they were to be released prior to the completion of the days mission.

#### 4. Corrective Action Taken:

a. Following the initial insertions of the morning, I discussed the VNAF problems with the USAF advisor, Major Custer, and recommended that he ride in the lead aircraft with the VNAF flight leader instead of riding in the trail aircraft. In this position, he can clarify instructions, assist in detailed navigation, and influence the actions of the flight both from an operational and safety point of view. Major Custer later advised me that he had tried to move into the lead ship but the flight lead had said he should continue to ride in the trail.

b. It was impossible to discuss the refusal to carry supplies or the unauthorized early release with the flight lead because of his absence. As mission commander, I am required to debrief the VNAF flight leader on his performance at the end of the mission. This was not complete until my return to Soc Trang at 2100 hours and the VNAF had departed at 1730.

c. A brief summary report on VNAF support was submitted to A.A.B. at 2300 hours, 27 April 1968 and the problems were discussed with the Battalion Commander, 13th Aviation Battalion the same evening.

#### 5. Recommendations:

a. USAF or US Army advisor should ride in the lead ship with the VNAF flight leader.

b. VNAF flight leader should study the operational map in more detail and plan his approaches on the map as the instructions are given him over the radio. Mission Commanders and gunships must give the VNAF more explicit briefings and instructions to include vectors as necessary.

c. VNAF flights should be responsive to the missions assigned by the mission commander whether they are troop transport, resupply or medevacs. The mission commander is charged with utilization of the assigned assets to support the mission of the ground commander and all assigned assets are sometimes necessary to accomplish this mission.

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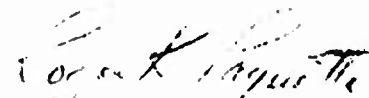
d. VNAF assets when assigned should comply with the same schedule as required of the UH-1 assets since the ground commander asks for assets by number of transports and does not differentiate between VNAF and UH-1's, hence the mission commander must be able to fully rely on all assets being at the appointed time and place for the duration of the mission.

### 6. Summary:

a. The overall performance of the VNAF flight on 27 April 1968 was totally unsatisfactory and was not indicative of their usual performance which has shown distinct improvements since January 1968 when they first joined in the airmobile effort. It is considered that much of the difficulty during this mission can be attributed directly to the VNAF flight leader. The VNAF squadron must give extremely careful attention to whom they select as flight leaders especially during this developmental period.

b. Extreme caution must be exercised at this point to insure that the VNAF does not develop the philosophy that they are the masters of the operation since in the end, their assets are merely the tools which the ground commander will use to accomplish his mission. They must allow the ground commander to set the time and describe the mission, then utilize their expertise and assets to the accomplishment of the same. In my view, this is not their attitude now and they must be imbued with a greater spirit of support for the ground troops which in itself would lead them to greater efficiency and proficiency in their daily operations.

A TRUE COPY



ROGER K. PAQUETTE  
Major, Artillery

/s/Carl H. McNair Jr.  
/t/CARL H. MCNAIR JR.  
Major, Infantry  
Commanding

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R &amp; D

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